

THE B A

Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

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JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

2001 WMU missions celebration slated

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

The 2001 Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) Annual Missions Celebration will be held January 26-27 at Country Woods Church, Byram. The meeting's theme is More Than You Can Imagine, based on Eph. 3:20-21.

Guest speakers include:

- Al and Beth Bailey, Southern Baptist representatives to Middle America. Beth Bailey is a native of Ripley.
- Wanda Lee, executive director of national WMU in Birmingham.
- Matt and Shea Williams, Southern Baptist representatives to Southeast Asia and Oceania. Williams is the son of Mississippi WMU President Rebecca Williams of Gautier. Shea Williams was born in Natchez.

- **David Michel**, associate executive director for missions extension at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) in Jackson.

- R.T. and Fran Buckley, Southern Baptist representatives to Central and Southeast Asia. The Buckleys are natives of Picayune.

• Larry Cox, vice-president of public relations and development at the International Mission Board (IMB) of the Southern Baptist Convention in Richmond, Va. Cox is a native of Greenwood.

"We are praying for a wonderful outpouring of God's spirit on our time together. We want our people to experience a time of worship and celebration of all God has done

in and through Mississippi Baptists in missions this year. We want it to be a time of affirmation, celebration, and motivation as we join together, believing that God in and through us can do 'More Than You Can Imagine,'" said Kay Cassibry, Mississippi WMU executive director.

Breakout sessions at the meeting will feature:

- Baptist Nursing Fellowship (BNF): Nurses on Mission, with Mississippi BNF President Mandy Kitchens and Wanda Lee, who is also a registered nurse.

- The Many Roles of the Missionary Woman, with Cheryl Cox, wife of Larry Cox and a Memphis native who attended Mississippi College in Clinton.

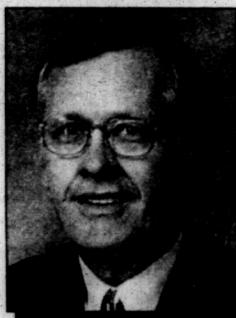
- **Volunteers:**
Making An Impact in
International Missions,
with Larry Cox.

• From My Backyard to the World and Back Again, with Lee Nan Sugg, IMB missionary on stateside assignment in Jackson.

- **Men on Mission:** In Construction, Agriculture, and Disaster Relief, with Jim Didlake, director of the MCB Men's Ministry Department.

• Praying for Missionaries, with Kevin Meador, director of Prayer Closet Ministries in Hickory.

- **Beyond Crosswalk:** Acteens are



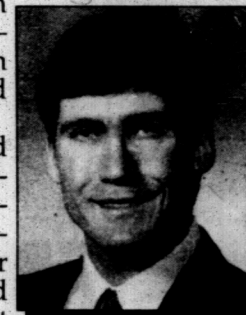
Cox



Lee



Michel



M. Williams



S. Williams

Alive, with Robin Keels, Girls in Action/Acteens and camp consultant in the Mississippi WMU Department.

"We will have three missionary couples sharing on our program this year. Each couple will share in one of the sessions and also in one of the breakout conference times.

"As our missionaries share, we know that we will hear about the wonderful things God is doing in their areas of work — More Than You Can Imagine," said Rebecca Williams.

"I am also delighted to have our new executive director of national WMU on our program. I know our women will be blessed to hear her and to get to know her.

"She has a demanding yet joyful job as our leader, and it is our privilege to pray for her consistently," Williams said.

"This will be my last annual meeting to serve as president of Mississippi WMU. When I look back over the past four years, the things that God has done are beyond what I could have imagined four years ago."

"Many changes have occurred. Transitions have gone smoothly. Opportunities have been plentiful. Time has gone fast. Our state work continues to grow stronger.

"To God be the glory!" she said.

For more information on the missions celebration, contact the Mississippi WMU office at (601) 292-3316 or toll-free outside Jackson at (800) 748-1651, ext. 316. E-mail: spruitt@mbcb.org.

WHAT'S IN THE RECORD

YEC standing room only

Heupel shares faith

Letters to the editor

Sunday School lessons

Miss. CP finishes strong

Mississippi Cooperative Program (CP) gifts to the work of the Lord for the year ending December topped \$2.4 million and helped ring out the 2000 year with a record total of \$2,927,433, according to the 2001 secretary-treasurer's measure of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) in Jackson. December CP gifts were \$1,240,000, or 5.81% less than the \$2,574,400 given in December 1999, and 14.72% less than the \$2,927,433 given in December of the year before. However, the year-end total was \$100,000 more than May, August, and November totals. The 2001 CP budget of \$2,912,922 nearly eclipsed the 1999 CP gift total of \$2,922,655 established in January 1997. The 2001 CP receipts for 2000 also represent a 1.73% increase in gifts over the previous record year. The 2001 Mississippi CP budget is set by messengers to the 2000 Mississippi Baptist Convention annual meeting at \$3,047,097 — another record amount. Mississippi CP helps fund such programs as the annual Evangelism Conference January 5-16 at Broadmoor Church in Jackson, and the Baptist Student Union Retreat at Camp Garavito in Clinton in January 26-27.

SBC CP up five percent

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Cooperative Program (CP) funds received for the first 10 months of 2000, according to Morris H. Chapman, executive officer of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, A total of \$15,740,638.11 was received from December to support Southern Baptist CP ministries globally and across North America, or \$14,616,085.55 received in December 1999. To date, October 2000 through December 1999 is ahead of the same period of the year 1999, compared to \$42,516,032.13. In designated giving for 2000, the total of \$4,181,941.12 was 10.34% above the 1999 total of \$3,786,009.91. For the fiscal year to date, designated giving remains 6.02% ahead of last year's total of \$10,046,997.84 as compared to \$1,476,322.43. For the cooperative program Allocation Budget, the year-to-date receipt of \$4,638,036.68 are \$1,638,977.13, or 33.9% above the budgeted \$41,999,096.25. The monthly receipts showed \$15,349,558.10 received, more than 109% of the budgeted amount of \$13,999,691.75.

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Perkins Jr.**
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A modern City of Brass

Our nation is preparing for a change of leadership, as it does every two, four, six, and sometimes eight years. Congressmen (and women) come and go while Senators rise and fall, but nothing captures both our dreams and anxieties for the future as does the inauguration of a new President of the United States.

Although the Founding Fathers in their wisdom mandated an elected president with limited powers rather than an all-powerful king, Americans still tend to regard the holder of the office as imperial. Too many Americans, in fact, look upon the presidency as the one office — and the holder of that office as the one person — who can "turn the country around."

True, the President of the United States has a powerful opportunity to influence the direction of the country for either good or evil. He is our leader and deserves our prayers. He can and should appeal to our best characteristics, and he should lead by example.

However, no one person can halt the moral and spiritual decline in which this great country has willingly indulged for many years. That is up to each and every one of us, and especially so where Christian leadership is concerned.

There are many biblical and historical examples of countries who turned their backs on God, and there is at least one clear picture of where we are headed from the discipline of letters.

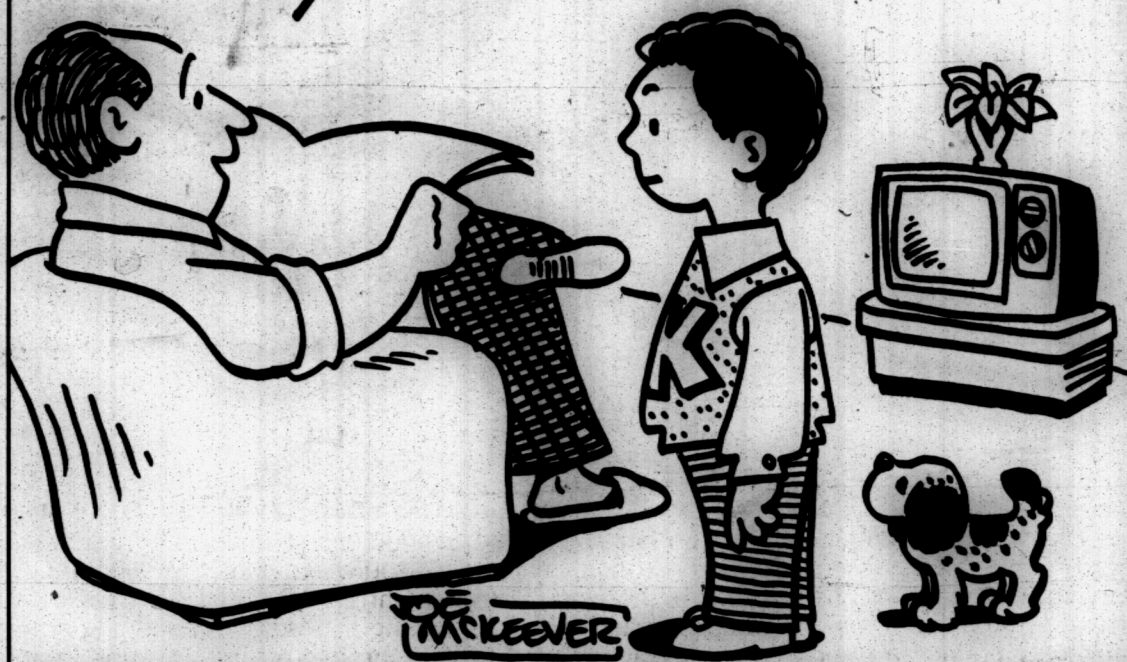
British poet Rudyard Kipling, who won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1907, wrote *The City of Brass* nearly 100 years ago. The poem describes an ancient culture of Kipling's creation that threw off their God-given heritage for the momentary pleasures of the world and was eventually destroyed by its own excesses. Excerpts include:

*When wine stirred in their hearts, their
bosoms dilated.*

*They rose to suppose themselves kings over
all things created;*

*To decree a new Earth at birth without labor
or sorrow;*

**"WELL, TO BECOME A CANDIDATE FOR
PRESIDENT, FIRST, JOIN A BAPTIST
CHURCH!"**



*To declare: "We prepare it today and inherit
it tomorrow..."*

*Swiftly these pulled down the walls that
their fathers had made them,
The impregnable ramparts of old, they razed
and relaid them...*

*They replied to their well-wishers' fears, to
their enemies' laughter,
Saying: "Peace! We have fashioned a God
which shall save us hereafter..."*

*They said: "Who is irked by the law?
Though we may not remove it,
If he lend us his aid in this raid, we will set
him above it!"*

*So the robber did judgement again upon
such as displeased him,
The slayer, too, boasted his slaid, and the
judges released him.*

And finally, tragically:

*There was no need of a steed or a lance to
pursue them;
It was decreed their own deed and not
chance, should undo them...
For the hate they had taught through the
State brought the State no defender,
And it passed from the role of Nations in
headlong surrender!*

As we embark on yet another new era in our country's rich history, we would do well to remember Kipling's prescient words — and pray.

Editor's note: The full text of The City of Brass by Rudyard Kipling can be found at http://users.deltanet.com/users/llambert/public_html/ctybrass.html

GUEST OPINION:

The coming 'time wars'

*By Denton Lotz, executive director
Baptist World Alliance*

are living. Indeed without notice, scholars have begun to date events of Christian history, indeed all of history, with new letters, C.E., which they call the "Common Era."

There is nothing to prevent secular scholars from using C.E. instead of A.D., but it seems presumptuous of Christian scholars to substitute these letters for what has been a custom for millennia! It brings up the question: Who speaks for the Church? Do scholars have the right to change the way we regard time?

Jeremy Rifkin in his book *Time Wars* states that every revolution tries to control time. The French Revolution brought

in a ten-day week. The Chinese have their calendar, as does Islam and Judaism.

As we enter 2001, we are again reminded of the "time wars" of this world. It is a question of not only who will control time but who will control the hearts and destinies of humankind? Will this religion or that religion triumph?

Indeed the sad state of facts is that the "clash of civilizations" has begun.

The world is threatened with religious wars. Recent visits to India, Nigeria, Thailand, and Lebanon have reminded us of the tragedy of religious wars: Muslims and Jews in Israel, Christian and Muslims in

Bosnia/Serbia, and Muslims in India, Buddhists and Christians in Burma.

Will there be an end to this world? Will there be peace?

The prophets and Scripture look forward to that day when indeed there will be peace, when the lion will lie down with the lamb, when swords will be beaten into plowshares, when one day the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Christ and he shall reign forever and ever!

Meanwhile, in this interim period, we will have wars and rumors of wars. We will have "time wars" on who will control the calendars and the dates by which we live.

As believers in Christ, whom we believe is the end of time, we need not worry about dates and calendars. Rather we need to be concerned about whether we are following Christ faithfully. May the new year find you faithful followers of Christ in the Lord's time, indeed in this new year of our Lord.

Anno Domini, A.D. 2001!

LifeWay missionaries report on their work

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — In addition to working with Southern Baptist missionaries and introducing LifeWay resources to Baptists and other evangelicals in their regions of the world, LifeWay Christian Resources' four missionaries spent much of their second year multiplying themselves by training others.

The four serve in a LifeWay partnership with the International Mission Board (IMB). They are: Steve Cretin, Southeast Asia/Oceania, based in Singapore; Neal Cordle, Central and Eastern Europe, based in Prague, Czech Republic; Michael Woolridge, Eastern Africa, based in Nairobi, Kenya; and Ernie McAninch, Western South America, based in Quito, Ecuador.



LIFEWAY MISSIONARIES — In addition to working with Southern Baptist missionaries and introducing LifeWay resources to Baptists and other evangelicals in their regions of the world, LifeWay Christian Resources' four missionaries spent much of their second year multiplying themselves by training others. The four serve in a LifeWay partnership with the International Mission Board. They are: Ernie McAninch, Western South America, based in Quito, Ecuador; Michael Woolridge, Eastern Africa, based in Nairobi, Kenya; Steve Cretin, Southeast Asia/Oceania, based in Singapore; and Neal Cordle, Central and Eastern Europe, based in Prague, Czech Republic. (BP photo by Morris Abernathy)

They returned to Nashville in early December and presented formal reports on their year of service.

McAninch, who used 41 persons trained by him or LifeWay, said, "Our goal is to multiply ourselves, to multiply LifeWay." His plans for 2001 include several LifeWay conferences conducted totally by others.

"It's intentional serendipity by which we plan," said McAninch, who focused his efforts in Chile, Peru, and

Ecuador. "We put ourselves in places where God can open up relationships. We've had nothing but open doors."

He cited the need for Christian resources and other helps for families.

"That's the number one need for western South America and, I dare say, for all of Latin America," McAninch said.

Cordle, who moved during the year from Frankfurt, Germany, to Prague, said much

of his work was accomplished through partnerships.

For example, an all-age Bible study was launched in Belarus through a partnership involving Belarussian Baptists, LifeWay, IMB, International Teaching Ministries (translated LifeWay curriculum), and the Missouri Baptist Convention (partnership with Belarus).

"Because God brought us together, we are accomplishing things none of us could have done alone," Cordle said.

He cited language as his biggest challenge.

"Every country [in the region] has a different language. We're very dependent on people who will help us logistically. We have worked through IMB folks in deliberate and intentional ways," Cordle said.

Woolridge said training pastors was a primary focus of his work this year. In addition, he attended numerous annual meetings of Baptist groups, staffed

exhibits and led conferences at booksellers and publishers meetings, and made contacts with numerous Christian bookstores.

Walking each day in his Nairobi neighborhood where most homes are surrounded by fences and have guards posted, Woolridge said he met many of the men who serve as guards. He now leads a Bible study for about 20 of them.

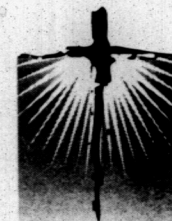
"Even with all the danger, people want to know about God," Woolridge said.

Cretin conducted the first official FAITH Sunday School evangelism clinic in Singapore, hosted a Beth Moore women's conference, hosted Vacation Bible School and Sunday School conferences, and taught in several seminaries.

"Our relationship [with IMB missionaries] over the past two years has grown into a working partnership of mutual respect and support," Cretin said.

He plans to expand services throughout his region in 2001. "The longer we are on the field, the more convinced we become that the best solution to our expansion of LifeWay missionaries is to train national trainers to take our place," Cretin said.

Ted Warren, executive vice president and chief operating



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

THE
SECOND
FRONT PAGE

Record

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Partnership adds believers

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — A total of 2,754 new believers has been added to the kingdom of God through a partnership evangelism project involving Baptists from the United States and South Korea. W.H. "Dub" Jackson, who helps organize partnership evangelism projects for the International Mission Board, led a team of 121 Southern Baptists from the United States to South Korea. There, the volunteers paired with Korean believers to host 37 evangelistic campaigns in local churches.

"The experience is better in every way than any of us could have ever hoped for," said Alan Tungett, a LifeWay Christian Resources employee who led one team. "There are very few things in my Christian life that can compare with what our team has experienced over the last few days." Partway through the outreach, Tungett reported his team already had witnessed 19 people accept Christ. One of the new believers did not have a Bible, so Tungett gave the man his.

Another volunteer, Paul Dowdy, from McKinney, Texas, led a team with Kim Jo Mo, pastor of Emmanuel Church in Suwon City, Korea. Kim's church averaged about 30 attendees before the crusades. Fifteen new members joined the church and contacts were made with 20 other new believers. Dowdy's team witnessed in apartments, public schools, a university, and a Samsung Electronics building. Through their visits, the Christians shared the gospel with many people and saw God work in extraordinary ways.

The team was invited to lay hands on a Korean woman who was suffering from a severe back injury. After the Christians prayed for her, she experienced a complete healing. The woman accepted Christ as her Savior and led several others to the Lord through her testimony.

The number of new Christians is significant for Baptist leaders in South Korea, who feared their convention was no longer growing. They contacted Jackson last year to request volunteers for the nationwide campaign, which officials hoped would jumpstart new growth in the convention.

Looking back

10 years ago

The Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief Unit is called to Vaiden after a tornado destroys several sections of the community. Mississippi Baptists handled food services, providing between 1,660-1,800 hot meals per day for tornado victims and response personnel.

20 years ago

Two Southern Baptist ministers are invited by the prime minister of Iran to conduct Christian worship services for the hostages held in Tehran, but arrive a day too late to participate. John Walsh and Charles Kimbell missed the service because of flight schedules and visa delays.

50 years ago

The Mississippi College band is making fine progress but is not as large as it should be due to lack of instruments. Baptist Record readers are asked to donate instruments such as flutes, bassoons, clarinets, cornets, french horns, violins, violas, and cellos.

Fire destroys First Church in Carriere

The sanctuary and educational building of First Church, Carriere, burned to the ground Saturday evening, December 30. The church's fellowship hall and activities building were spared major damage.

Pastor Gary Smith and his family were home in the adjacent parsonage when a church member who happened to be passing by saw smoke and flames. Smith immediately called 911 and firefighters were quickly on the scene.

Smith has served Carriere for 36 years. The sanctuary and educational building were both built in the 50's and had been remodeled.

"What the fire didn't get, water did," said Smith. "There were four inches of water in the office area."

"The firemen did all they could," he said. Firefighters from all over the area fought the blaze. According to Smith, "I understand there were 71 firemen altogether who helped."

Smith was especially grieved by the loss of the church's video equipment and tapes. "We had several video tapes that just can't be replaced," he said.

The church had their regular worship service in the fellowship hall. "We'll get by," said Smith. "We always have."

"We've had over a thousand cars come by and look at the damage," he said. "So many people have offered help, some from as far away as Florida. I've never seen such an outpouring of love."

"I came into this world with nothing and I'll leave with nothing," Smith said. "The Lord has taught me not to worry too much about what happens in between. We'll be fine."

As of January 2 the cause of the fire had not been determined. The fire marshal and insurance adjusters are continuing their investigation.

Youth evangelism conf. standing room only

By William H. Perkins, Jr.
Editor

More than 2100 people crowded into A.E. Wood Coliseum on the campus of Mississippi College (MC) in Clinton December 28-29 for the 2000 Mississippi Baptist Youth Evangelism Conference.

The standing-room-only event, sponsored annually by the evangelism department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and funded through the Cooperative Program, resulted in more than 800 decisions for Christ ranging from professions of faith to commitments for being stronger witnesses when they return home.

"We were blessed with great weather, despite forecasts of snow/ice mix and hazardous

driving conditions," said Don Lum, lead planner for the event and consultant in the evangelism department.

"MC did an excellent job of hosting the conference. Jim Turcotte (dean of enrollment services) and his department did a great job hosting the breakfast for the 1,000 people who pre-registered," Lum said.

Ken Smith, an evangelist from Leesburg, Fla., utilized the story of Gideon in Judges 6-8 to challenge the students present to "make a difference in their world," according to Lum.

"Just as Gideon called out an army, there is an army of young people across Mississippi who have been called out, committed, and commissioned to make a difference," Lum said.

In addition to Smith, confer-

ence attendees heard Gary Permenter, an evangelist from Columbus, explain how to share their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

"Gary went over a simple plan titled, 'The Gift,' and encouraged the students to give the gift of Christ to their classmates," Lum said.

Kevin Williams, a member of the music staff at The Church of Brook Hills in Birmingham, served as worship leader. Matt Fore, a Christian entertainer from Asheville, N.C., performed.

"Matt used his skill as an illusionist to make the point that young people should discern the true things in life that come from a relationship with Jesus. Kevin and his band of Christian musicians from the

Birmingham area added a lot of energy and created an atmosphere for worship," Lum said.

Lum commended conference attendees for their behavior during the event.

"Both Ken (Smith) and Matt (Fore) commented on the attentiveness and participation of the young people who were there," he said.

The 2001 Mississippi Baptist Youth Evangelism Conference is scheduled for December 27-28 at A.E. Wood Coliseum on the campus of Mississippi College in Clinton.

For more information, contact Lum at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3280 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 280. E-mail: dlum@mbcb.org.



Evangelist Ken Smith of Leesburg, Fla., preaches at the 2000 Mississippi Baptist Youth Evangelism Conference.

A CHUNK OF ASPHALT

Within a mile or two of my home there is a house that sits back off the road, in the woods, almost unnoticed. In fact, I noticed their driveway before I even knew there was a house there.

The driveway, which is well-kept and attractive, always has a large chunk of asphalt sitting somewhere near the edge. I'm not talking about a rock, or an attractive stone. I'm talking about a five-inch thick, 12 inches across, oblong chunk of asphalt.

Numerous times while I've been out jogging, I have noticed that hunk of black, man-made surface sitting out there on the edge of their driveway.

More than a few times I thought about picking it up and throwing it off into a ditch somewhere because it was so unattractive. Besides that, I wondered and worried that someone might turn into the driveway, hit the boulder, and damage their car.

I refrained from tossing that chunk of asphalt because somewhere, way back in the back of my mind, was the sneaky suspicion that maybe, just maybe, they had it there for a purpose. I did not spend a lot of time wor-



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

rying about it, but I did give some thought to it.

Then, the day arrived when my eyes were opened! One morning, a few days after Christmas, I was out trying to jog off some turkey and dressing and pecan pie, when I passed by the house with the asphalt boulder.

The people who lived in the home had put their garbage out and lo and behold, wonder of wonders, everything made sense! The garbage can they used had been broken, or at least had lost its wheels, and so instead of sitting upright, the can would topple over except for the fact that the big, black, asphalt chunk balanced the can perfectly.

What I had thought was an eyesore was actually a useful and effective "garbage-can-propper-upper." I was amazed,

excited, and blessed all at the same time!

As I jogged on down the road, I thought about the revelation I had just received. How many times through the years had I seen someone, or heard of someone, that either they or others thought had no purpose at all. They may not have been overly gifted and may not have been outwardly attractive, but God, in his plan and wisdom, had a marvelous purpose.

I thought of those marvelous, precious saints who, through the years, have propped me up. Some of them were quick to take inventory and say, "I don't have much. I can't sing. I can't teach or preach. All I am is a pew warmer." Yet, in fact, they were so much more.

The Apostle Paul certainly had insight into this truth as he

explained in his great discourse of 1 Cor. 12 that there are many members of the body, each having different gifts, yet all are important.

Paul went so far as to say in 1 Cor. 12:23 that there are even members "which we think to be less honorable," but they have a specific and important part in the work of Christ.

As I continued on my run it occurred to me that without the chunk of asphalt those folks' garbage can would not work. If they had put it out there without the prop, their trash would probably have been scattered everywhere, but simply because it was there everything worked — it worked well and without problems.

What a blessing it would be to our churches and what a Christ-glorifying experience would take place if each of us would come to understand that the Lord has made us for a purpose.

As we find that place and fill that need for which we have been made, some of us may look like we are just big chunks of asphalt sitting on the side of a driveway. Yet, God knows that is not true, for we are specially made to fit into his great purposes to serve him and to bless others.

Students aided in witness to 'Secular Club'

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) — Seven generations ago, Charles Darwin's "Origin of the Species" challenged Christianity as a viable worldview. Several months ago, Charles Darwin's seventh great-grandson began challenging Christian students at Seneca High School with similar questions.

Darwin's descendant and other members of a newly formed "Secular Club" at the Louisville, Ky., public school, had begun to raise questions that Seneca's Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) chapter could not answer.

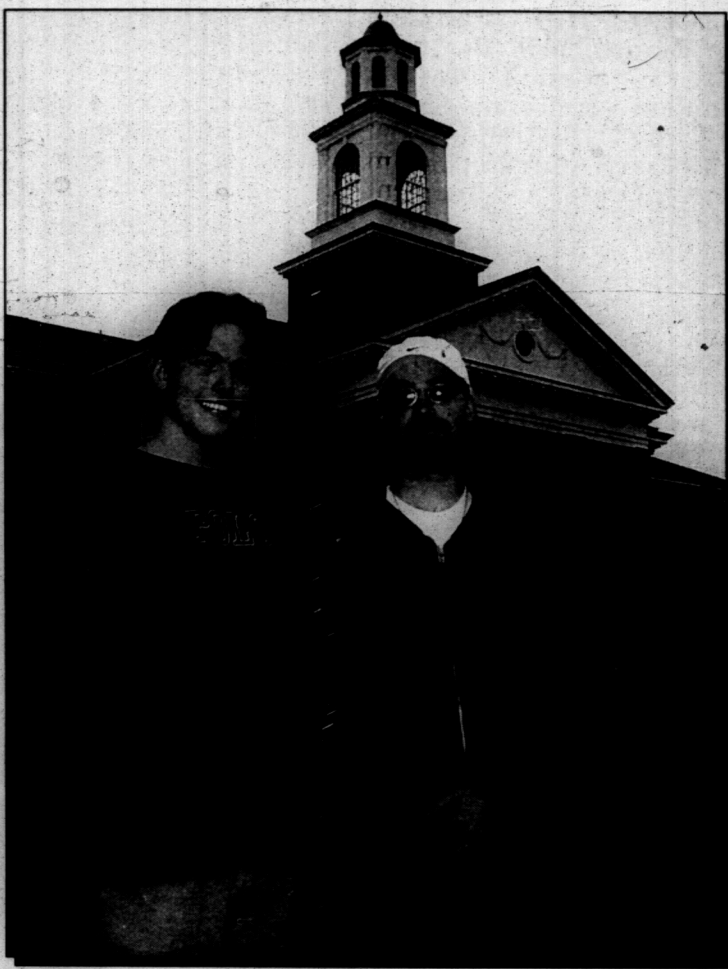
The FCA members turned to Southern Seminary students Jeremy Blythe and Tim Boyce for apologetic aid.

"The Christian students were getting a lot of challenges," said Boyce, a master of divinity student from Owenton, Ky. "Evidently, about all they [the Secular Club members] did was come up with theories about how they could knock down Christianity."

Boyce, who was on the FCA speakers' list, was invited to give apologetic presentations at the school. He called Blythe, an advanced master of divinity student from Jacksonville, Fla., for assistance. In three FCA meetings in October, the two tackled three questions in particular which the Secular Club had raised.

Are all religions equal? Is Darwinism correct? Does God exist? Boyce endeavored to explain the first question. Blythe took the last, and they split the second.

Each 30-minute presentation included an audience of both Secular Club and FCA members. A time of questions and answers



Blythe (left) and Boyce

followed each session. "We covered almost anything you can think of in Q&A — all the way down to biblical authority, authorial intent," Boyce said.

Discussions sometimes lasted more than two hours. But, the 30 students in attendance — divided evenly among atheists and Christians — stayed the duration.

"The atheists were by far the most vocal," Blythe said.

"They [the Secular Club members] paid closer attention too," Boyce added.

The two apologists said the students' reactions during the presentations varied. "When I was presenting any argument, all the Christians would smile," Blythe said.

The atheists just looked contemplative. "For the atheists, I think it really caused them to think more analytically," Blythe said. "But for the Christians, I think it really buttressed their faith."

Blythe and Boyce said the Christians probably benefited the most. "They're just wanting to grow in grace and grow in being able to be a witness," Blythe said. "They want more information, and they really want to be a bolder witness."

"Even now, just in e-mails I've received [from the students], I have had at least two or three of them say explicitly that they have a greater confidence and greater courage about being a vocal witness for Christ."

"Really the best thing that we can do for high school students is to let them see that Christianity coheres with reality and that every other worldview is ultimately not science," Blythe said.

Missions link medical doctors in Thailand, Ky.

BARBOURVILLE, Ky. (BP) — Southern Baptist international missionary John Gibson has been practicing medicine in Thailand for 15 years. So what is he doing during his 10-month stateside assignment in Kentucky?

Practicing medicine, Gibson is pioneering an arrangement that allows him to fill in for doctors here in the States while they take turns serving his patients in Thailand. Gibson is working with a group of Christian doctors at Family Life Centers in Barbourville and Corbin. In turn, three physicians are spending three months each at a clinic Gibson runs in northern Thailand.

"This is the first time we've been able to do this," Gibson said. "We're trying to promote it as a way to expand our program and involve Christians here in the States in world missions."

Tom Ashburn, a member of First Church of Barbourville, is among the doctors participating in the exchange program. Ashburn, a veteran of several medical mission trips to Brazil, Guatemala, and Russia, recently returned from his three-month assignment in Thailand.

"We were working in a clinic setting, seeing patients every day," Ashburn said. Noting that "there were very few local doctors in the area where we were," he said the clinic "provides a way for the hill tribe folks to get consistent care."

Ashburn said the most significant part of the program is that it allows the medical ministry to continue. "I had to keep going back to the fact that this place would be closed if I wasn't there," he said, since Gibson currently is the clinic's only staff physician.

Gibson's interest in medical missions dates back more than 20 years, soon after he became a Christian during medical school. He later met his wife, Linda, a nurse anesthetist who had made a commitment to missions at age 12.

After getting married in 1979, the Gibsons went on three overseas medical mission trips during their first year of marriage.

"My call to missions was almost synonymous with my salvation," Gibson recalled. "I knew I owed the Lord everything I had at that point. The more I read the Bible, the more I was convinced that every Christian's responsibility was to be serve the Lord."

The Gibsons were appointed as missionaries to India in 1984. Before they reached the field, however, Prime Minister Indira Ghandi was assassinated, sparking widespread violence and instability. As a result, the Gibsons' assignment was put on hold and they later were reassigned to Thailand.

"We went to Thailand without a lot of foreknowledge about what was going on," Gibson noted. He said his first

major hurdle was discovering that "Thailand requires all foreign-trained doctors to pass a medical exam given in the Thai language."

"We had to depend on the Lord," he said. "It was a miracle that I was able to pass the test. It confirmed that this is where the Lord wanted us."

The Gibsons spent their first several years in Thailand serving at Bangkla Baptist Hospital, where he balanced such diverse roles as chief physician, administrator, surgeon, and obstetrician.

In recent years, "we struggled with what our ministry role should be and sensed the Lord was leading us in a different direction," he said. "Our area of central Thailand had really developed economically and a lot of private hospitals had moved in. The need end of it was beginning to diminish."

"We knew there were a lot of places in Thailand that had needs," he added. As a result, they began conducting mobile clinics in a remote area of Thailand near the Laotian border. About two years ago, they established a new clinic in northern Thailand while continuing to conduct mobile clinics in the region.

Since moving to northern Thailand, the Gibsons have seen a tremendous spiritual response to their ministry efforts.

"I look at medicine as a tool or platform for evangelism,"

Gibson explained. "My first love is to share the story and see people come into the kingdom." During the past two years, he said, more than 600 Thai and Hmong people in the region have become Christians and about 20 churches and missions have been started.

"To walk into a village and be the first one to carry the gospel message, it doesn't get any better than that," said his wife Linda.



GIBSON FAMILY — John and Linda Gibson have served as Southern Baptist medical missionaries to Thailand since 1985. The couple has two daughters, Kimberly, 10, and Kaitlyn, 8. (BP photo)

Youth ministry forum set for Feb. 15-16

The Youth Ministry Team of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) will sponsor a Youth Ministry Forum designed specifically for part-time and volunteer youth ministers on February 15-16 at Mississippi College (MC) in Clinton. The forum, which will be conducted in MC's Student Center, begins at 6:45 p.m. on February 15 and ends at noon on February 16. Allen Jackson, youth ministry professor at New Orleans Seminary, will be the keynote speaker. There is no charge to attend the forum, but pre-registration is required. Also, reservations are required for the free breakfast that will be provided at Camp Garaywa in Clinton at 8 a.m. on February 16. To pre-register and to make reservations for the breakfast, contact Mark Lott at (601) 292-3295 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 295. E-mail: mlott@mbcb.org.

JUST FOR THE RECORD



The mission groups and leaders of Springdale Church, Ripley, prepared "Shoe Box" gifts to provide Christmas for children around the world as part of the Franklin Graham Operation Christmas Project. This year 214 boxes were prepared for distribution, up from 22 just two years ago. Each box cost approximately \$20 with funding provided by the Brotherhood organization and individual church members. Margaret Smith serves as chairman of the project. Randy Hamilton is pastor.

First Church, Richland, will celebrate its 100-year anniversary on Feb. 25. A reception will be held on Saturday, Feb. 24, from 2-4 p.m. in the worship center. Worship services will be at 8:30 and 10 a.m. on Sunday morning followed by a catered lunch and a praise and worship service at 1:30 p.m. For more information, call the church office at (601) 939-1715.

Parkway Church, Houston, is sponsoring a Sportsman's Seminar and Wild Game Supper on Jan. 20 at 6 p.m. Guest speaker will be Jene Hoyt, national champion turkey caller and David Fortenberry speaking on deer calling and deer stand safety. Parkway Brotherhood Program is in charge of the event. For more information, contact the church office at (662) 456-2745.



First Church, Louisville, packed 204 shoeboxes for project "Christmas Child," on Nov. 12. Pictured are Jerry Rankin, president of International Mission Board, who delivered the morning message during "Celebrate Jesus," and Don Boone, pastor.

Pleasant Hill Church, Olive Branch, held its 2000 children's mission group recognition service on Sept. 17. Pictured (first row) are Will McCrary, Morgan Green, Savannah Green, and Ireland Alsobrook; (second row) Angelique McCrary, Alexandria Sneed, and Vaylen Alsobrook; (third row) Lauren Hamm, Katie Brooker, and Tyler Brooker. Awards were given for completion of mission steps during the year. Erica Wommack (not pictured) received her World Venture bracelet with all the charms for completing all six workbooks. The program theme focus was "Stand in the Gap," Margaret Lackey State Mission Offering.



Children of Pleasant Hill Church, Olive Branch

The 13th annual Candlelight Prayer Vigil for the Unborn, sponsored by Right to Life of

Jackson, will be held at the Mississippi State Capitol, Jan. 20 at 6 p.m. For more information, call (601) 956-8636.



GAs of Centreville Church, Centreville

GAs of Centreville Church, Centreville, received their bracelet and charms for completion of World Venture. Pictured (front row) are Meghan Dykes, Whitney Stutzman, and Mallory Knighton; (back row) Donelle Crum, Courtney Brashier, and Kristen Stutzman.

Undivided will be in concert at First Church, Ridgeland, on Jan. 14 at 10 a.m. For more information, call (601) 856-6505.

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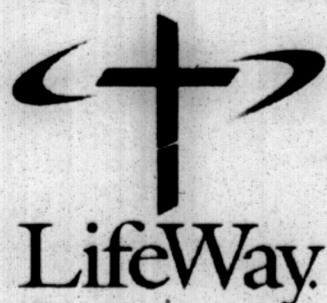
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HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

January 11, 2001

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Office of Communication.

2001 State Senior Adult Retreats at Gulfshore

"The Spiritual Transformational Senior"

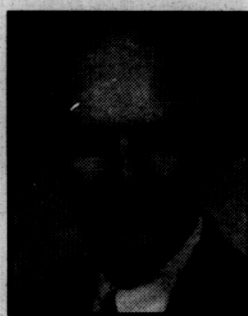


The Richardson Family

May 14-16 Senior Adult I

Preachers: Jay Richardson, Greenville;
Gary Richardson, West Point;
James Richardson, Madison

Music: Ian Richardson and the Senior
Adult Choir, FBC, Cleveland



May 17-19 Senior Adult II

Preacher: Phil Walker, Ridgecrest, Madison

Music: James Beasley and the Senior Adult Choir, FBC,
Crystal Springs

Phil Walker

Conferences on Reaching Seniors through Sunday
School, My Identity in Christ, Free to Forgive, Happy
Side of Life (humor), Fitness and much more

Discipleship and Family Ministry Dept.
For info call: 968-3800 in Jackson or 1-800-748-1651



Dean Register

May 21-25 Senior Adult III

Preacher: Dean Register, Temple BC,
Hattiesburg

Music: Ken Hopkins and the Senior
Adult Choir, Temple BC, Hattiesburg

SUNDAY SCHOOL GROWTH CONFERENCE 2001

"THE DIFFERENCE I CAN MAKE"

FEB. 27, 2001 • WEST LAUREL BAPTIST CHURCH, LAUREL • 9 A.M.-NOON



Conference Leader:

James Walker, LifeWay Christian Resources, Nashville

James grew up in north Mississippi. Saved at the age of 19 and called into the ministry at 21. James has served churches in Tennessee and Kentucky as minister of education and administration and has used the Growth Spiral as a tool for evaluation, motivation and planning in the churches he has served.

- It's on the tip of your tongue. You just can't put your finger on it. Something is happening.
- It is a tool for diagnosing church/Sunday School health.
 - It is a tool for future growth.
- It is a tool to show how the Sunday School is the foundational strategy for the local church.

- | | | |
|------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| • Enrollment | • Ministry Touches | • SS Leadership Meetings |
| • Attendance | • Space | • Worship Attendance |
| • Prospects | • Workers | • Offerings |
| • Teaching Units | • Training | • Baptisms |

Eagle Awards will be presented.

Sunday School Growth Conference Pre-registration Form

(No cost for this event.)

Church Name _____
Church Phone _____
Complete Address _____
Name of Person Making Reservations _____
Daytime Phone _____
Number of Persons Attending from the Church _____
Names of All Persons Attending _____

Any church pre-registering prior to February 16
will receive a 10-year history of the church and a
Growth Spiral diskette.

Complete and return to: Sunday School Department,
PO Box 530, Jackson MS 39205

Need more information?

Call us at 1-800-748-1651 or (601)968-3800



Christian Performing Arts Festival

March 23 - 24, 2001

Ridgecrest Baptist Church, Madison

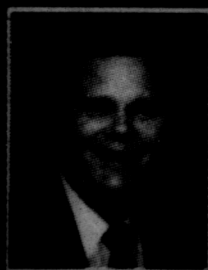
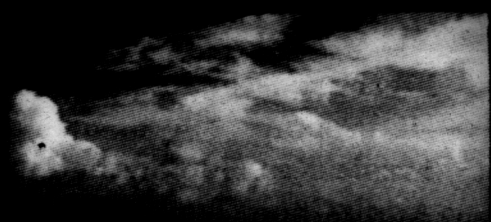
Cost \$25 (includes T-shirt, snacks and lunch on Saturday)

• Drama • Clowning • Puppets • Church Recreation • Youth Ministry

For more information, please contact the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board
Discipleship and Family Ministry Department
601-968-3800 or 1-800-748-1651

BAPTIST DOCTRINE STUDY

2001

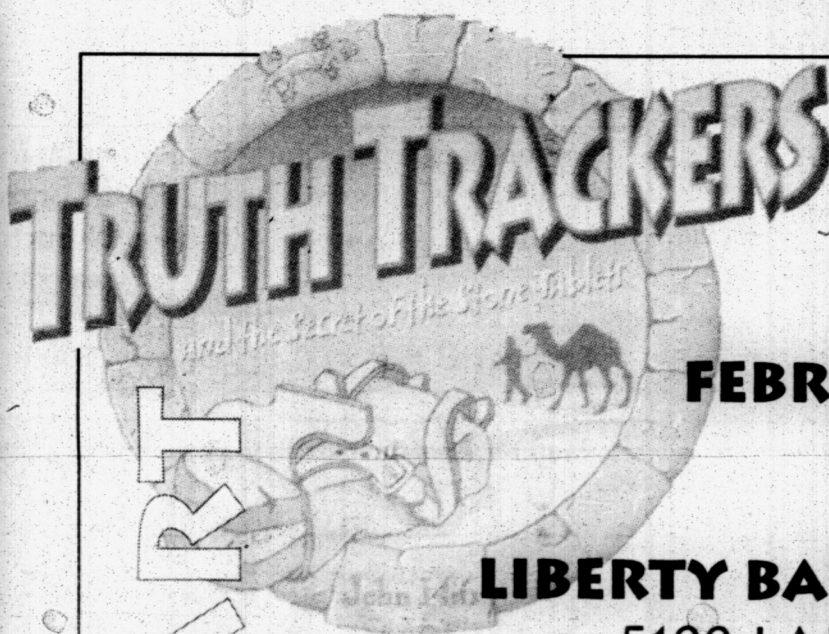


PREVIEW &
BRUNCH

GRACE

- January 30, 2001, 9 a.m. - noon
First Baptist Church, Clinton
- February 1, 2001, 9 a.m. - noon
First Baptist Church, Biloxi

For more information contact the Discipleship
and Family Ministry Department:
1-800-748-1651 or in the Jackson area 968-3800



FEBRUARY 13, 2001

9 A.M. - NOON

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Christian Store



VBS JUMPSTART

Pastor & Staff



COUNSELING CONFERENCE

**FEBRUARY 13, 2001 • CAMP GARAYWA, CLINTON
9 A.M.-3 P.M. • COST: \$7 (INCLUDES LUNCH)**

Purpose

To equip and resource pastors and staff members to become better able to counsel and assist people with life's struggles and problems. This training will enable ministers to fulfill their pastoral care duties.



Neil Knierim, manager of Leader Care Section,
Pastor-Staff Leadership Department of LifeWay
Christian Resources of the SBC, Nashville



Paul Stephenson, director of Pastoral Care
Ministries for Baptist Health Systems, Jackson



Perry Sanderford, director of
CrossRoads Counseling Center, Rankin
Baptist Association, Brandon

Church Administration-Pastoral Ministries Dept., MBCB
Matt Buckles, director
for more info call 968-3800 in Jackson or 1-800-748-1651

Attention: All Lads, Crusaders, & Challengers



**SATURDAY
JANUARY 20, 2001**

Mississippi College

Grades 1-12

1-5 p.m.

\$4 per person



R.A. DAY REGISTRATION

DEADLINE FRIDAY, January 12

(one form per church please)

CHURCH _____

CHURCH ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ZIP _____

PERSON SENDING IN FORM _____

PHONE NO. (During the Day) _____

NO. PEOPLE _____ X \$4 per person = \$ _____ Amt. Enclosed

(Make checks payable to "Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.")

MAIL TO: **R. A. Day**, Men's Ministry Department

P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530

Call 968-3800 or 1-800-748-1651 for more info

2001 Family Adventures

Family Life Conferences

- **Tuesday, February 6, Ethel Baptist Church, Ethel (near Kosciusko)(1-662-674-5204)**
Youth - Harvey Ellis, MBCB
Parenting - Don Hicks, MBCB
Marriage - Tim Alexander, Tupelo
Singles-again - Perry Sanderford, Brandon
- **Tuesday, March 6, New Hebron BC, (1-601-694-2243)**
Preschool/Children Workers - Don Hicks, MBCB
Youth - Harvey Ellis, MBCB
Singles - Glenn Shows, MBCB
Parenting - Dot Day, Hazlehurst
Marriage - Perry Sanderford, Jackson
- **Thursday, March 8, Corinth BC, Magee (1-601-847-2642)**
Marriage - Glenn Shows, MBCB
Senior Adults - Ken Hopkins, Hattiesburg
Parenting - Dot Day, Hazlehurst
Preschool - Beth Holmes, Clinton

Surviving in Blended Families

- **Tuesday, Feb. 20, 7-9 p.m., Rocky Creek BC, Lucedale**
with Diane Swain, Little Rock, Ark.

Marriage Enrichment

- **Friday and Saturday, Feb. 17-18, 7-9 p.m.**
Neshoba Baptist Association Center, Philadelphia
with Loyd and Rita Sweat, Amory: 1-662-656-1820



For more information:
Discipleship and
Family Ministry Department
MBCB

1-800-748-1651
968-3800 (in Jackson)

Pray this day for...

January 12 - January 25, 2001

Prayer Ministry Office • P.O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone 968-3800, Ext. 304 • Mississippi PrayerLine 1-800-787-PRAY

Pray in total agreement with the Word of God -

By Faith Believing. By Faith Receiving.

The 57 million residents of Hubei Province, China, are generally thought of as being argumentative, stubborn and untrustworthy. Most of its people have never heard that Jesus died to save them. Ask God to encourage and strengthen Christian workers.

For (1) Missions Development Strategy (Strategic Missions); (2) Baptist missionaries serving in Kosovo report that there has been a spiritual struggle with religious extremists in the city of Pristina. Please stand by them in prayer.

For (1) State Evangelism Conference (Evangelism); (2) Deacon Emphasis Week (CAPM); (3) Please pray for Prime Minister Jenny Shipley of New Zealand.

For (1) Missions Development Strategy (Strategic Missions); (2) Baptist missionaries serving in Kosovo report that there has been a spiritual struggle with religious extremists in the city of Pristina. Please stand by them in prayer.

For (1) Bi-vocational Ministers/Ministers' Wives Banquet (CAPM); (2) Remember in prayer missionaries undergoing medical treatment and all those who have recently had loved ones to pass away.

Journeyman Beth Johnson serves in the Glasgow area community of Larkhall, United Kingdom. Pray for Beth and the leaders of their evangelistic outreach to youth, Rock Solid, and for the receptivity of these young people to receive Christ.

Some Baptist representatives in Southeast Asia & Oceania live and work in a place where Jesus' name has not been held high for many generations. Pray for their protection as they seek to be a light for Christ.

Pray for: Missionary Ken Moss as he enlists people and coordinates a medical trip to the Guarayos people in San Pablo, Bolivia, South America, in March 2001; Tom Martin as he works with village leadership in San Pablo; and for the people's openness to the gospel.

The Refugee Team of Colombia asks you to pray for God's leadership and timing as they begin evangelizing and discipling internal refugees, and as they seek out committed Colombian Christians to start new churches.

For (1) Area Keyboard Festivals (Church Music); (2) Steamboat BC in Nevada is reopening. Pray for a church planter and for the finances for a building. Pray for a prayerwalking trip to an unchurched, Muslim-controlled area of the former Soviet Union.

For (1) Mississippi Baptist Symphony Orchestra Retreat (Church Music); (2) Remember missionaries on statewide assignment, emeritus and former missionaries as they have opportunities to share the challenge of mission around the world.

Pray for the newly elected president, vice president, and general secretary of the Ghana Baptist Convention. Ask the Lord to give these men quality, quiet time with Himself in the midst of heavy schedules and their pressing responsibilities in the convention.

A Mestizo man in Ecuador accepted Christ at the Bible study at his sister's home in Riobamba. He is an alcoholic and separated from his wife. He brought his wife to church and she accepted Christ, too! Pray for both of them as they grow in their faith.

For (1) Sanctity of Human Life Sunday (Christian Action); (2) Missionary Betty Smith has served in Brazil for more than 25 years. Pray for the opportunities in the area of counseling. Pray also for her neighbor who is interested in the gospel since Betty gave her a Bible.

CHURCH BUSINESS ADMINISTRATORS CONFERENCE

February 1, 2001
First Baptist Church, Madison

**Theme: "Leading People
Effectively and Managing Resources Efficiently"**

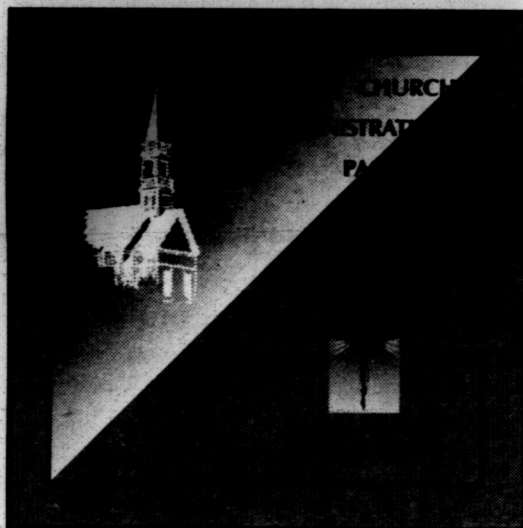
Purpose: To provide information and challenge to church leaders on the administration, leadership, and resources of church finances with a biblical basis being strongly emphasized.

Target Audience: Pastors, administrators, treasurers, financial committees, deacons, trustees

Registration Fee: \$10 (includes lunch at the church)

Sponsored by:
Church Administration-Pastoral Ministries Department, MBCB
Metro Baptist Association, Jackson

Call 601-968-3800 or 1-800-748-1651 for more information.



Church Facilities Workshop

March 15, 2001
8:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Country Woods Baptist Church
6737 Siwell Road
Jackson, Mississippi
371-7955

The conference is for pastors, staff members, building committees, long-range planning committees, business administrators and maintenance/property personnel.

Please complete the registration form below and mail,

E-mail or fax to:

Keith Gordon, Church Building Services
P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205

Fax number: 601-714-7426, E-mail: kgordon@mbcb.org

Church Facilities Workshop

March 15, 2001

Registration Form

Cost: \$10 per person (includes lunch)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Church/Vendor: _____

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

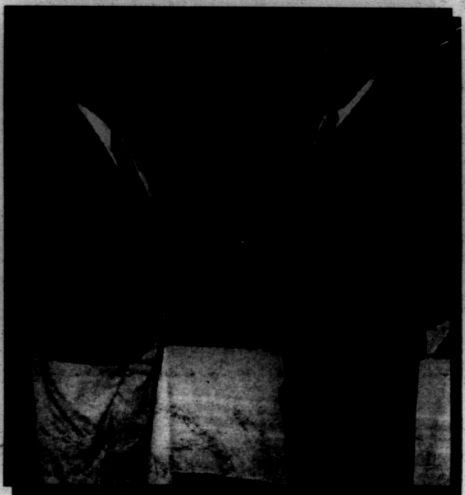
HOUSE TOPS.

NAMES IN THE NEWS



Mt. Carmel Church of Edinburg recently ordained Bill Fulton, Jimmy Wilcher, and Charles King as deacons. Pictured (from left) are William Keith Fulton, pastor; Fulton; Wilcher; King; and Laston Webb, chairman of deacons.

Albert Weeks was ordained Nov. 12 at Damascus Church, Hazlehurst. Pictured (from left) are David Patterson, pastor; and Weeks, pastor of Fellowship Church, Lorman.



Patterson and Weeks

Mary Elyean Moulds Greene, 91, of Jay, Fla., died Dec. 31. Funeral services were held on Jan. 3 at Cora Church. A former resident of Louin, she has resided in Jay for the past seven years. Her husband, William Earl Greene, past president of Clarke College, Newton, (1944-54) died Dec. 30, 1993. Survivors include son, William Earle Greene, and daughter, Mary Elyean

Adkinson, both of Jay; grandchildren, Samuel Greene of Saucier, and David Greene of Byneville, Fla.; and four great grandchildren.

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Gary Bowlin, full time vocational evangelist, formerly of Brandon has relocated his offices. His new address is P. O. Box 869, Summit, MS 39666. The telephone number is (601) 657-1272. Bowlin is beginning his 22nd year in evangelism.



Cochran and Mitchell

Blaine Cochran (left) and Jonathan Mitchell were recently presented perfect attendance certificates for Sunday School at

Pine Grove Church, Picayune. Mitchell was recognized for two years and Cochran for one year. Reggie Bridges is pastor.



Pine Grove Church, Picayune, recently held deacon ordination service for Steve Cochran, Oliver Roberts, William Seal, and Jerry Loupe. Pictured (from left) are Bill Warren, interim pastor; Cochran; Roberts; Seal; and Loupe.

G. Johnson, pastor, dies in accident

Glenn Johnson, 45, pastor of Peoples Church, Ripley, died Nov. 8 in Corinth as the result of an automobile accident. Funeral services were held Nov. 10 at



Johnson

Peoples Church and graveside services at Gilvo Cemetery, Tupelo.

Officiating the services were Lowell Johnson, New Hope Church, Tupelo, and Titus Tyer, Fellowship Church, Ripley.

Survivors include his wife Paula Coker Johnson, Ripley; daughter, Christina Johnson, Ripley; sons, William Johnson Jr. and Christopher Johnson, Ripley; sister, Rhonda Johnson, Meridian; and mother, Leora Hamm Johnson, Tupelo. He was preceded in death by his father, William Gene Johnson.

First Church, Ripley, has set up a memorial fund for the Johnson family at Peoples Bank of Ripley. To contribute to the Glenn Johnson Memorial Fund, contact the Peoples Bank of Ripley at P.O. Box 419, Ripley, MS 38663. Telephone (662) 837-8191.

STAFF CHANGES

Rick Henson has been called as pastor at Oakdale Church, Brandon. He is a native of Meridian and has served



Henson

churches in Louisiana since 1973. Henson is a graduate of Clarke College, Louisiana College, and received his masters of divinity and doctor of ministry at New Orleans Seminary.

Daniel Memorial Church, Jackson, has called Steven Potts as pastor effective Dec.

10. Potts, a native of Ohio, previously served Crystal Lake Community Church in Crystal Lake, Ill. He is a graduate of Mount Vernon Nazarene College, Mount Vernon, Ohio, and Wesley Biblical Seminary, Jackson. His wife is the former Heather Gober of Clinton.



Potts

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BWA DAY FEBRUARY 4, 2001
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- BWA Brochures
- Offering Envelopes

Check the Website
We'll have BWA Day information on the BWA website: www.bwanet.org

You can touch the world! Here is a special opportunity to help Baptists around the world through the Baptist World Alliance.

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Send your Baptist World Offering to:
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McLean, VA 22101-6005 USA
Phone: +1-703-790-8980
E-mail: BWA@bwanet.org
Website: www.bwanet.org



Note: After April 1, 2001, the new address is 405 North Washington Street, Falls Church, VA 22046

RA Day set for Jan. 20 at Miss. College

The annual Mississippi Royal Ambassador (RA) Day will take place from 1-5 p.m. on January 20 in Swor Auditorium on the campus of Mississippi College (MC) in Clinton. All boys in grades one through twelve and their leaders are invited. Cost is \$4 per person and registration deadline is January 12. Fee includes admission to the MC basketball game that day and limited supplemental insurance. For more information and to register, contact Carol Wright in the Men's Ministry Department at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board at (601) 292-3335 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 335. E-mail: cwright@mbcb.org.

Rankin to hold missions rally on January 18

Rankin Association in Brandon will host their annual missions rally beginning at 5:30 p.m. on January 18 at First Church, Brandon. Rick Ferguson, senior pastor of Riverside Church in Denver, will be the keynote speaker. Riverside Church is the largest Southern Baptist church in Colorado and supports 24 satellite congregations in the Denver area. A light meal will be served at 5:30 p.m.; cost is \$4 per person and reservations are required by January 15. For more information, contact the association office at (601) 932-2182.

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Champion athlete has 'victory that counts'

BETHANY, Okla. (BP) — Sounding more like a preacher than an All-America quarterback of a national championship team, University of Oklahoma (OU) quarterback Josh Heupel told members and guests at Council Road Church in Bethany, Okla., to keep their eyes "fixed on the cross."

"The main reason I'm here today is to help strengthen those who already walk with the Lord, and encourage those who don't to take the first step toward him," Heupel told the Sunday morning worshipers a few weeks before he led his team to defeat Florida State University for the national college football championship.

He was joined on the program by three teammates: running back Quentin Griffin, center Bubba Burcham, and defensive lineman Bary Holleyman, a member of Council Road.

Griffin, Burcham, and Holleyman were introduced in both worship services, then moved to various Sunday School classes to give their testimonies.

Heupel was named the Heisman trophy's runner-up Dec. 9 in New York City.

At Council Road Church, Heupel stepped to the pulpit and unleashed a message from Deuteronomy 8 that left pastor Mark Hartman with nothing to do but give an invitation.

Hartman introduced Heupel as a man of character and integrity, and one who has a power in him that is not of him.

The multiple-award-winning quarterback, who broke

OU's career record for touchdown passes in the second game of the season, told the packed house he has always loved football.

Raised in the northeastern South Dakota city of Aberdeen with a population of 25,000-30,000, Heupel grew up around football, as his father is a football coach at Aberdeen Central and his mother is a high school principal.

Heupel's mother was quoted as saying when she handed 2-year-old Josh over the fence to his father during football practice, she knew she would never get him back.

"I was at my dad's practices, wanting to be the best athlete I could," Heupel said, "and I had some success in high school."

After graduation, Heupel went to Weber State College, which was a 14-hour drive from Aberdeen. He was redshirted his freshman year and was not happy there.

"There was a weight on my shoulders, and I was not happy with who I was," Heupel said. "I wasn't strong enough to handle things in the right way. I was living for Josh Heupel, I placed football before God and I didn't like who I saw in the mirror."



JOSH HEUPEL — OU quarterback Josh Heupel (flashing the #1 sign) and tight end Trent Smith celebrate a touchdown. (BP photo)

Heupel said he decided to go to a junior college, thinking a new place and new challenges would make him happy.

"I enrolled at Snow Junior College, in a town with a population of 3,000, half of whom were college people," he said, "but I still wasn't happy, and I

couldn't understand why I felt I was crumbling under the weight on my shoulders."

Heupel, who attends Riverside Church, a nondenominational congregation in Norman, said he knew the Lord but didn't love him — and "there is a key difference."

"Once you know the Lord, you will go back to him," Heupel declared. "I decided I was going to bow down before the Lord and let him take control of my life."

Immediately, he said, the weight was lifted from his shoulders, and when he looked in the mirror, he was happy with who he is because I know "I have the victory that counts."

Heupel, who volunteers with second-grade transitional kids in reading and writing in a Norman school, said there was a change in him as a person and as a football player.

"It wasn't that I was working harder," he noted. "I've always been a hard worker, but it was because God took charge."

Opportunities began to open up, he said, one of those being the chance to come to the University of Oklahoma.

"It wasn't until I gave him the authority to let him use me to reach others that he gave me the blessings in life I so desired," the 6'2", 214-pound athlete pointed out.

BAPTIST COLLEGE NEWS

Mississippi College (MC) held its third annual December commencement ceremonies on Dec. 22 in A. E. Wood Coliseum. Degrees were conferred on 209 candidates, with 39 of these obtaining advanced degrees. Fifteen law degrees were awarded. Charles E. Martin, vice president for academic affairs, emeritus, gave the commencement address. Martin, a native of Mantee, retired from MC in 1996 after serving the institution for 38 years. Donald Kleeb, pastor of Gum Grove Church, Brookhaven, gave the invocation. Frank Harmon, pastor of First Church, Newton, gave the benediction.

Mississippi College (MC) School of Business and the Office of Continuing Education are pleased to announce the start of the innovative accelerated prerequisite program that allows students to complete prerequisites for the master of business administration (MBA) degree in an abbreviated time frame. The program is designed for students who desire an MBA but do not have a business background or undergraduate degree or lack only a few of the required prerequisites. Most courses offered through Accelerated MBA Program meet two evenings per week over a four-week period in Self Hall. Course offerings cover such subjects as management;

marketing; microeconomics; quantitative and statistical techniques; accounting and financial management. Individuals interested in the Accelerated MBA Prerequisite Program may contact Ken Gilliam in the Office of Continuing Education (601) 925-3263 or e-mail at: continuing-ed@mc.edu.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, CALHOUN CITY, MS is seeking a full-time minister of music. Send resume to Rev. Paul L. Smith and Mrs. Helen Lackey, P.O. Box 94, Calhoun City, MS 38916-0094. For more information call the church at (662) 628-6633, fax (662) 628-1733. www.cfbcc.com.

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THE SEARCH TEAM FOR THE PENSACOLA BAY BAPTIST ASSOCIATION is now accepting resumes for the position of director. Please address inquiries and correspondence to Dr. Bob Greene, Pensacola Bay Baptist Association, 1100 W. Michigan Avenue, Pensacola, Florida, 32505. All correspondence should be received by February 28, 2001.

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ON ACCOUNTABILITY

Editor:

Item 1: There are about 35,000 young people who have made a commitment to some kind of missionary service. The shocking fact is that probably 95% will never make it into that work, and one of the main reasons is that, in many cases, we don't even have the money to follow up their initial commitment. — George Verwer, founder and international coordinator of Operation Mobilization, in *Current Thoughts and Trends*, 12/2000.

Item 2: Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Lottie Moon Christmas offering for International Missions offering goal: \$115 million.

These items seem to be unrelated until one finds an SBC Mexican missionary in Oregon who received only \$200 a month from the North American Mission Board. This missionary from Mexico to the U.S. also happens to pastor the largest Baptist church in his area, a community of 85,000 population.

One has to ask the obvious

question: Where is the accountability from the international, national, state, and local association back to the local church for the funds which the members of the local churches contribute?

The Scripture has much to say regarding giving to missions, but not at the expense of the missionary. God will one day hold accountable those who at present do not want to give an account.

Allen W. Rhodes
Vicksburg

ENEMY IN CAMP

Editor:

The enemy is in our camp! I was visiting the Natchez Trace Indian Festival in Ridgeland when I met a man who was from New Jersey originally and moved to Meridian to "preach" to us wayward Baptists, Methodists, and any other "Christian" Religion that was under "false doctrine!"

The time is getting short. Even now a Mormon church is being built in my community.

Lazy, sleeping children of God are allowing Satan to have his way little by little and we don't seem to care.

That's why this country is in a mess!

We Christians sleep while the enemy comes and takes control of everything! Pastors, it's time to go to war with the world. Children of God, gird up yourself also. It's time to fight for what is right in God's sight — before it's too late!

Let us not be prisoners of Satan's domain.

Stand up, now. Fight! Fight for God. Fight for the lost souls who are held captive. Stand up against false prophets and teachers. A war is raging and the enemy is already in our camp.

May God have mercy on us!
T. A. Green
West

HELP YOUNG PREACHERS

Editor:

I hope you will be gracious enough to publish this even

though the church I pastor is not a part of any association.

The reason I write this is because I have waited for some pastor in some association to complain. None has.

As I understand the wording, "director of missions" does not mean "pastor of churches."

As an example, I know churches when they are in need of a pastor will invite the director of missions to preach for them until they find a pastor, and they will accept the invitation while young men of God, called to preach, are not asked.

Why won't the directors of missions be gracious enough to recommend that the church in need give some of these young men an opportunity to do what God has called them to do?

There is nothing wrong with the director of missions helping out when he can provided there are no young preachers available.

A.R. Garrison
Belmont Road Church
Sardis



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.

Fellowship offers encouragement to ministers

By Tony Martin
Associate Editor

Recent reports tell of pastors and staff burning out spiritually, emotionally, and physically. This is devastating to the minister's family and church.

According to Perry Sanderford, staff counselor of Crossroads Counseling Center in Brandon and co-founder and director of Covenant Ministerial Fellowship, there is help available for ministers

wanting to strengthen themselves and their ministries.

Sanderford was instrumental in founding the Covenant Ministerial Fellowship (CMF), a voluntary fellowship of ministers committed to mutual fellowship with God and each other, a commitment with accountability to a code of ministerial ethics, and providing opportunities for personal and vocational growth opportunities.

All over Mississippi, ministers meet regularly to encourage, enrich, challenge, and worship together. At a recent meeting at First Church, Columbus, ministers participating spent a morning sharing needs in their churches, brainstorming solutions to complex challenges, and generally affirming each other.

This meeting, as is typical of other meetings, was marked by a refreshing sense of openness and participation. It was not a "therapy" group; rather, pastors were encouraged to simply talk about their issues while being encouraged and appropriately challenged.

Sanderford states that to date, the CMF is the only known vehicle among Southern Baptist ministers that offers ongoing dialogue that enhances personal growth, a structure for voluntary discipline, and an avenue for restoration.

"Southern Baptist ministers need to learn to encourage and support one another in vocational and personal issues," said Sanderford. "The autonomy of local Southern Baptist ministers and churches is one of our greatest heritages and strengths. But as Ray Frank Robbins said, 'Any virtue carried to an extreme can become a vice.' The cry of

'autonomy' has adversely created an environment of competition and distrust which breeds 'isolation.'"

Sanderford believes that strong relationships among ministers will lead to stronger ministries. He states,

"Approximately 125 Southern Baptist ministers are prematurely terminated from their churches each month.

"I personally believe that the Covenant Ministerial Fellowship is just one of God's responses to this great evil that is manifesting itself in attacks on ministers," Sanderford said.

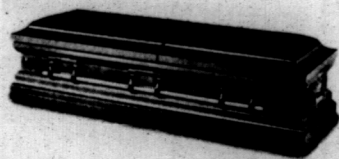
CMF is a non-profit corporation. Some funding comes from member's dues, while churches, other non-profit organizations, and individuals also contribute to the group's financial needs.

For more information write CMF, P.O. Box 1257, Brandon, MS, 39043, or call Sanderford at (601) 992-3768.

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FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

Preparation for Jesus

Luke 3:2-17

By Sharon Neff

Why is the word "repent" so unpopular? Is it because that in repenting, we must confess that we did something wrong and turn away from it? Is it because we must admit that we have sinned, and that in admitting sin, we acknowledge that there are moral absolutes, an idea that is extremely out of favor in our culture?

During our lives, we probably have encountered people who may have thought they were repenting, but were simply sorry they had been caught in their wrongdoing.

What about the person caught in an illegal business deal who apologized by saying "I'm sorry things turned out this way"? This

person planned to make everything right eventually, but was found out before this could be done. Because of misguided good intentions, it was difficult to admit to wrongdoing and truly repent.

Another person may be sorry to have been caught in an adulterous affair. Using excuse after excuse to justify the affair for a while, this person finally seemed to repent in a rush of emotion and grief. Yet it wasn't too long before immoral conduct began again, leading us to believe that the grief came from not being able to get away with it, not from the realization and admission of sin and the subsequent turning from it.

Yet, to live a lifestyle according



Neff

to God's design, repent we must. The message of repentance preached by John the Baptist as he prepared the way for the Lord is as relevant today as it was then. Many people of his day saw no need to repent. They followed the rules and laws — on the surface — then

twisted them and perverted the spirit of the law to their own selfish ends. Just as people today feel that any behavior is fine as long as they can get by with it, so many of John's contemporaries felt that anything they could get away with was fine as long as they could fit it into the letter of the law.

John called for repentance so that sins could be forgiven (v. 3). Sins must be admitted to and repented of so that we can receive forgiveness. Whether we are sneaking around so we won't be caught or wiggling around on the edge of right and wrong, we

must come clean at some point and admit our sin.

John was sort of an unconventional guy who never shied away from confronting people with their sin. He knew the Savior was coming and he knew that this was part of his mission in preparing the way. We know that the Savior is coming again, and that even though as Christians we are saved by grace, our actions do have eternal consequences.

Everyone needs to be prepared for eternity. Besides examining our own hearts, we may be called from time to time to confront people with their sin, urging them to repent and be restored, doing it all in a spirit of love.

It is interesting to note that repentance involves turning away from the sin, changing directions, possibly changing lifestyles. John said, "Produce fruit in keeping with repentance" (v. 8) and then gave examples to point the people in the right direction for a godly, ethical lifestyle.

One of my all-time favorite books is *What's So Amazing About Grace?* by Philip Yancey. It presents a life-changing picture of God's grace and forgiveness. Yet there is a chapter on "grace abuse" where he points out that grace abuse occurs when we say we're sorry and then go right back to the sin, usually again and again.

Grace abuse involves being sorry we got caught or even sorry we sinned, but then we purposely keep on sinning because we have the attitude that "Oh well, God's grace will cover my sin and I can ask for forgiveness again."

A truly repentant person will be making an all-out effort to turn away from the sin, even though they may stumble from time to time. Let us be brave enough to examine our hearts and lives, admit our sin, and live a life set apart by repentance.

Neff is a member of First Church, Greenville.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Staying the course

Acts 21:10-14, 27-32

By Lee Yancey

Saddened by the awareness of Paul's imminent death, the Ephesian elders were reluctant to let Paul board his ship. Luke, an eyewitness, uses the phrase "tearing ourselves away from them" to convey the emotional concern the elders had for them.

Traveling to Jerusalem, Paul was assured that great perils lay ahead. The boat on which he sailed left Miletus and made stops at Cos, Rhodes, and Patara. There Paul and his companions changed ships and went to Phoenicia. They passed by the island of Cyprus on the left and made port in Tyre of Syria.

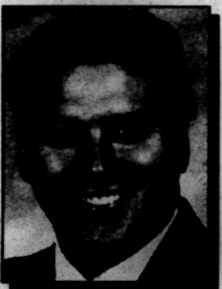
In Tyre, Paul found the local disciples and was warned not to go to Jerusalem. Paul's journey to Jerusalem is reminiscent of Jesus' final journey to Jerusalem in the Synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke). The same forebodings

marked Jesus' journey — the same strong resolve on Jesus' part, the same misgivings on the part of the disciples.

Caution (Acts 21:10-12). A certain prophet named Agabus in Tyre, the same prophet who predicted the famine in 11:27-28, prophesied that the Jews would hand Paul over to the Gentiles in Jerusalem.

Agabus took Paul's girdle (the long cloth that was bound several times about his waist), and with it bound his hands and feet indicating how his betrayal would occur. It is interesting that it did not occur that way exactly. Instead, the Jews would try to murder Paul in the Temple but the Romans would rescue him for his own protection.

The companions of Paul and the disciples in Tyre cautioned against Paul's going to Jerusalem. Well-meaning friends sometimes try to



Yancey

deter believers from doing what God wants of them.

Commitment (Acts 21:13-14). Many students of the Bible see similarities between Paul's response in 21:13 and Jesus' response in Luke 22:42, thus referring to the scene as Paul's Gethsemane.

While everyone pleaded with Paul not to go, they could not deter him from his firm conviction that the journey was in God's will. Paul was indeed willing to die if need be. The others finally recognized Paul's resolve and did not try to prevent him from his journey. If it was in God's will then they prayed that the Lord's will be done.

It was much like Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane. Neither did he relish facing the human agony of the cross but nonetheless committed himself wholly to God's purpose for him: "not my will, but yours be done" (Luke 22:42). Believers can commit themselves to follow God's leadership regardless of the consequences.

Consequences (Acts 21:27-32). Part of Paul's purpose in going to Jerusalem was to

express the unity between the Gentile and the Jewish Christians. He knew the risks involved in coming to Jerusalem and was more than willing to participate in the Jewish act of piety (the purification for the Nazirite Ceremony) if it would justify his Gentile mission in the eyes of Jewish Christians.

His purification would take seven days. As Paul returned to the Temple on the seventh day, he was spotted there by some Asian Jews, probably from Ephesus. Paul had spent three years in Ephesus and part of the time in their synagogue (19:8).

They made several accusations against Paul: that he spoke against the Torah, that he spoke against the Temple, and most seriously that Paul "taught against our people."

In a sense Paul did just this. His leveling gospel of oneness of all in Jesus Christ, Greek as well as Jew, reduced the significance of the Jews as God's chosen people. In this instance they accused him of temple violation by taking a Gentile beyond the court of the Gentiles into the sacred precincts that were open to Jews only.

The large outer courtyard, known as the court of the

Gentiles, was open to all. The temple proper was not. The charge was unfounded. Luke made that clear (v. 29).

The Asian Jews had seen Paul in the city with Trophimus, one of the Ephesian representatives in the collection delegation (20:4). They were looking for something against Paul, and they quickly jumped to the conclusion that Paul had taken the Gentile into the inner area of the Temple beyond the warning stones. (According to Josephus, a first century Jewish philosopher, there were warning stones set at regular intervals in Greek and Latin forbidding non-Jews from entering. Two of these stones have been excavated. Both had Greek texts and the same message: any foreigner proceeding beyond the barrier did so on pain of death.)

The Asian Jews stirred the crowd to a riot by making false accusations against Paul. The Roman commander and his troops prevented the Jews from killing Paul. People may misunderstand and/or violently oppose others who seek to carry out God's will.

Yancey is consultant for the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

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Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted.

All news items must be submitted to the editor at least two weeks prior to requested publication. Deadlines are subject to change without notice.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. Requests to return photos must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-2200. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

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Gifts of Honor and Memory

A portion of *The Village View* is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful, and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

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Experts: church Web pages often ineffective

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (ABP) — As more churches launch Web sites, too few are reaching their potential because church leaders don't define why they want a site or they fail to develop a strategy for what they hope to accomplish.

That's the collective opinion of several Web specialists throughout the country. They say too many church leaders are enamored by the gee-whiz technology of the Internet but aren't considering how to link their Web sites to their overall communications strategy.

"A lot of people just put up something because, 'Oh, I have to have a Web site,' but it doesn't meet any needs," said Lisa McMahon, senior Web administrator at the Southern Baptist International Mission Board and a consultant for Web design for the past five years.

Robert Reeves agreed. "Some churches have not thought through their strategy."

As communications director for the Kentucky Baptist Convention, Reeves gets calls every month from church leaders seeking advice on launching an Internet site.

Often, church Web sites are developed, launched, and maintained by just one person, he said.

"It tends to be their vision instead of a really thought-out vision that involves multiple people at the church and involves leadership," he said. "Once the fun wears out, that's the point to where a Web site begins to get stale."

Steve Hewitt, editor of Christian Computing Magazine, said many churches are hosting essentially a "billboard" site, advertising their location or church service times but "they're totally missing the potential of what can be done."

"We say that there are like 50,000

churches on the Web and 49,995 are doing it wrong," he said.

A church's vision for its Web site can be incredibly complex, including recordings of church services, chat rooms for Bible studies or multimedia presentations explaining the Christian faith to nonbelievers, or it can be as simple as a page that lists a church's worship schedule and phone number.

The key, consultants insist, is planning.

Rather than being distracted by all the possibilities posed by the Internet, Dave Stahl recommends that churches design their Web site to match their mission statement.

"I always encourage churches to forget about tools," said Stahl, communications director for Willow Creek Community Church in South Barrington, Ill. "Do your strategy, because tools are going to change, and you don't want

your strategy to change over time."

Ryan Bradley, Web manager for Beuchel Park Church in Louisville, Ky., agreed. Another common pitfall, he said, is trying to do too much too soon.

"Instead, start small then slowly build," said Bradley, who has led workshops on how to build a church Web site.

Bibliocipher

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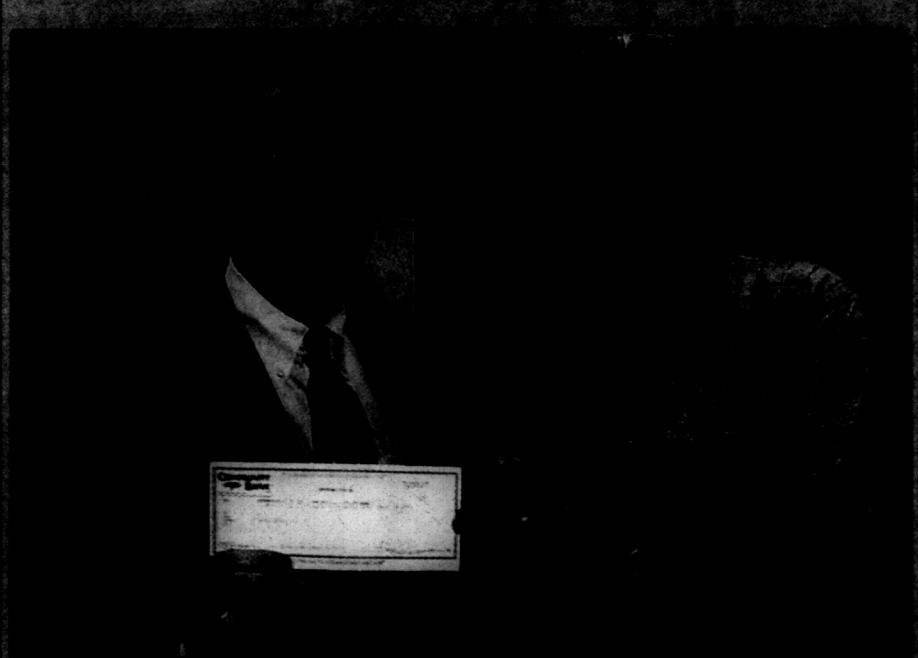
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CREC ELPACR HK CRAA;
ETG HK RXZ CREC
CEPACR EJEM CRM
YHHGL ELP CRAZ THC
EYEXT.

VNPA LXI: CRXFCM

Clue: Y = G

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Romans Six: Four.

Tourne benefits retirees



Andy Holder (right) presents a trophy to a retiree at the 2000 Retired Ministers Benefit Golf tournament. The Southern Baptist Convention, representing the proceeds from the 2000 Retired Ministers Benefit Golf tournament for needy retired ministers and their widows in Mississippi. Next year's tournament will be held September 13-14 at Bay Point Country Club in Brandon, Miss. (AP photo)

'zchurch' paving way to information highway

EVANSVILLE, Ind. (ABP) — Welcome to www.zchurch.com, one congregation's attempt to

put practically everything it does on the Internet. Log on to the Web site and you'll find a

cartoon Mayberry, where every building represents a different ministry for Bethel Temple, an interdenominational church in Evansville, Ind.

Click onto the video building and you can watch a Sunday worship service, complete with an online Bible, a form for submitting prayer requests, and an online donation process.

Pastor Steve Schwambach says everything was designed with non-Christians in mind.

"This gives them a way to kick the tires without having a salesman hang on them," says Schwambach, pastor at Bethel Temple since 1980.

"Unchurched people take incremental steps toward God," he adds. "If you can give them a smaller step, they're more likely to take it than if you ask them to make a huge leap."

zchurch was designed with the help of unchurched people. In fact, he adds, on the Sunday he outlined his vision for a Web site to the congregation, a third-time visitor who had been away from church 15 years asked if he could help.

That visitor recruited a non-Christian from work who had the technological skills to get zchurch off the ground, Schwambach says. The helper prayed to accept Jesus as her Savior after reading from the Web pages how to become a Christian, he says.

"This is just another hook in the water, it's trot-line fishing," Schwambach says. "Use every means you have."

With 4,000 visits each week, Schwambach predicts zchurch membership could someday dwarf Bethel Temple, which has a regular attendance of about 1,300.

Another growing project is zgroups. More than 400 people from every state and a dozen countries participate in e-mail Bible studies.

Jonathan Sieg, who attends college in Lanham, Md., says he is involved in a local church but enjoys the weekly encouragement he gets from zgroup members.

"It offers one thing different: the opportunity to interact with people all over the country, believers and unbelievers, with a great diversity of denominations, views and experiences," he adds. "It's eye-opening sometimes."

"We had all these techies who were just sitting there thinking to themselves, 'I can't preach a sermon, I can't teach a Sunday-School class, I can't sing a solo,'" he says. "They just were sitting there thinking, 'Well, there's nothing I can do.'"

"All of a sudden there's this whole pocket of people in our church, who are shaking the world for Christ just because we gave them one more way to do so," he points out.

Web site designer offers tips, advice

RICHMOND, Va. (ABP) — Lisa McMahon is convinced she can improve most church Web sites with two questions: who is your target audience and what is your goal for the site?

"If you don't know who your primary audience is, they really don't know what their purpose is," said McMahon, who has been designing Web sites for five years.

The questions sound basic, but McMahon said surprisingly few churches have thought through those issues.

Before choosing audience and goals, McMahon has a few more issues to consider:

- Who is your target audience?
- What type of information will your primary audience expect to find on your Web site?
- What information do you have readily available to provide to your audience?
- What types of information do you expect to put on your Web site? Calendar? Newsletters? Staff profiles?
- Who will serve as the Web manager for the site? The Web manager is the primary contact person for a site, McMahon said. That person also monitors access privileges to the Web site account for page editing purposes.
- Who will be the maintainers for the site? Page maintainers can be the Web manager or someone else completely. Page maintainers perform many of the technical duties, such as actually building the Web pages within the site, converting content to Web format and making updates to the pages.
- How often do you expect to update the content on your site?
- How much time per week or per month will you dedicate to updating your site?
- Who will be responsible for answering e-mail that comes via a link on each page of the Web site?
- What words do you hope will describe your site when it is built? Professional? Friendly? Creative?
- What materials do you have on hand that you would like to adapt and publish on the Web?
- Is your preferred domain name available? What will your Web address be if your preferred name is not?

McMahon said she has helped churches design Web sites to have. For those who are starting out, she said, she suggests looking at the first five of their favorite sites they can tell a design

McMahon is senior Web administrator at the Southern Baptist International Mission Board and a consultant for Web design for the past five years. She can be reached at lisa@lismb.org or lisa@lismb.com.